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C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 003374

SIPDIS

NSC FOR CBARTON
HQSOUTHCOM FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/22/2014

TAGS: PGOV VE

SUBJECT: HENRIQUE SALAS ROEMER SHRUGS OFF STRATEGY

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ABELARDO A. ARIAS FOR 1.4 (D)

11. (C) Proyecto Venezuela leader Henrique Salas Roemer said that the government would win by fraud in the regional elections during a short courtesy call on the Ambassador at the Residence October 22. Salas Roemer criticized the Carter Center for legitimizing what he described as a fraudulent recall referendum. Citing polls, he said the opposition was poised to fare well in the regional elections on October 31, but Chavez would sweep the map on October 31 by cheating.

12. (C) Salas Roemer called himself the "most famous unemployed Venezuelan." He dismissed the Ambassador's suggestion that he would have many opportunities to seek election in the next few years, saying he would never run without an impartial process. In response to Ambassador's queries about a future strategy for the opposition, the party leader merely returned to the subject of prospects for the regional election.

Comment

13. (C) Salas Roemer demonstrates a lack of vision that is typical of opposition leadership, many of whom have no plan for reorganizing after what they expect to be a Chavez rout on October 31. Claims that he will abstain from future elections appear somewhat disingenuous coming from this self-absorbed, longtime politician.

Brownfield

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